

Special Briefing on Release of Country Reports on Terrorism 2005

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MR. ERELI: Good morning, everybody. Welcome to our briefing today where we will be presenting the Department of State's *Country Report on Terrorism* for 2005. We'll have two briefers today. First, our Ambassador for -- in charge of Counterterrorism, Ambassador Hank Crumpton will give you an overview of the narrative portion of the report. And then the Deputy Director of the National Counterterrorism Center, Russ Travers will talk a little bit about the annex which includes the statistics and the methodology behind them. And then we'll open it up to your questions. So we'll begin with Ambassador Crumpton.

AMBASSADOR CRUMPTON: Good morning. Thanks for attending today's briefing. I am please to release the annual congressionally mandated *Country Reports on Terrorism 2005*. Besides meeting congressional requirements, the 2005 report aims to inform, to stimulate constructive debate and to enhance our collective dynamic understanding of a global terrorist threat. It should serve as a reference tool for policymakers, the American public and our international partners about our efforts, progress and challenges in the global war on terror.

This year's report includes a chapter, Strategic Assessment, which illustrates trends and addresses the question: Are we winning against al-Qaida and its affiliates? This chapter is not mandated by Congress. But Secretary of State Rice and President Bush believe that we should tackle this question directly and provide the best assessment possible.

A broader assessment is important because this is not the kind of war where you can measure success with conventional numbers or aspire for a single decisive battle that will break the enemy's will or hope for a signed peace accord to mark our victory.

al-Qaida: Our collective international efforts have harmed al-Qaida. It's core leadership no longer has effective global command and control of its networks. The few enemy leaders that have avoided death or capture find themselves isolated and on the run. Thus, al-Qaida increasingly emphasizes its ideological and propaganda activity to help advance its cause. By remaining at large and intermittently vocal, bin Laden and Zawahiri symbolize resistance to the international community demonstrate they retain the capability to influence events and inspire actual and potential terrorists.

Nonetheless, there is evidence that core leaders, including bin Laden and Zawahiri are frustrated by their lack of direct control. As demonstrated by the Zawahiri-Zarqawi correspondence of October. With these Afghan bases eliminated, with Pakistan reducing its safe haven along the border and with global international cooperation constraining terrorist mobility, al-Qaida and affiliates are desperate to claim Iraq as their own. This is why Zarqawi fears a viable Iraqi nation and foments terrorist attacks and sectarian violence. This is why we and our allies, along with the emerging Iraqi Government must deny Iraq to al-Qaida. We must maintain unrelenting pressure against al-Qaida. We know they aim to attack the U.S. homeland and seek to match or even surpass the terror of 9/11. Our strategy to defeat terrorists is structured at multiple levels: a global campaign to counter violent extremism; a series of regional collaborative efforts to deny terrorists safe haven and numerous bilateral security and development assistance programs designed to build liberal institutions; support the rule of law and address political and economic injustice.

This is not just the right thing to do. It also enhances our partner's capacity to resist the terrorist threat and address conditions that terrorists exploit. We work with or through partners at every level whenever possible. To implement this strategy, U.S. ambassadors, as the President's personal representatives abroad, lead interagency country teams that recommend strategies, using all instruments of statecraft to help host nations understand the threat and strengthen their political will and capacity to counter it.

One example of such an interagency strategy is the Trans-Sahara Counterterrorism Initiative, a multifaceted, multiyear strategy aimed at defeating terrorist organizations by strengthening regional CT capabilities, enhancing and institutionalizing cooperation among that region's security forces promoting democratic governance, discrediting terrorist ideology and reinforcing bilateral military ties with the U.S.

I would like to discuss some of the trends noted in the report. In response to our operational success, enemy operational elements are becoming smaller in size. We see more threats emerging from small cells and even individuals, some with more autonomy, therefore they are more difficult to detect and engage. These looser terrorist networks are less capable and more diffuse, but in some ways, more dangerous. We may face a larger number of smaller attacks, less meticulously planned and local, rather than transnational in scope. Terrorists groups are

becoming more sophisticated. They use technology, especially the internet, to improve their global reach, intelligence collection and operational capacity.

A third trend is the increasing integration of terrorist and criminal enterprises. In some cases, terrorists use the same networks used by transnational criminal groups exploring the overlap between these networks to improve mobility, build support and avoid detection.

Another trend -- we have denied Iraq as a safe haven for Saddam Hussein's terrorist regime, for remnants of Abu Nidal, for Palestine Liberation Front leader Abu Abbas and Ansar al-Sunna, which operated a base near the Iranian border. Iraq now harbors a democratically elected government. Iraq is also a battlefield, where U.S. coalition and Iraqi forces are engaging international terrorists as part of the security mission mandated by UN Security Council Resolutions 1546 and 1637.

For some terrorists Iraq is also a cause. Networks that support the flow of foreign terrorists to Iraq have been uncovered in several parts of the world. We must, therefore, help Iraqis secure their country. We must build partnerships with capable institutions in the new Iraqi Government and the broader region. Many governments, including Jordan and the UK, have played critical roles in this collective effort.

Iran: Again in 2005, Iran remained the most active sponsor of terrorism. Tehran has repeatedly refused to bring to justice, publicly identify or share information about detained senior al-Qaida members who murdered Americans and others in the '98 East Africa Embassy bombings. Iran encouraged anti-Israeli terrorist activity, rhetorically, operationally and financially. Iran provided Lebanese Hezbollah and Palestinian terrorist groups with extensive funding, training and weapons.

In addition, Iran has provided assistance to anti-coalition forces in Iraq. As the President said earlier this year, some of the most powerful IEDs we're seeing in Iraq today include components that came from Iran. Regarding a WMD terrorism threat, Iran presents a particular concern given its act of sponsorship of terrorism and its continued development of a nuclear program.

Safe Haven: This year's report also includes a chapter on terrorist safe haven. Why are safe havens so important? Like enemy leadership, enemy safe havens are a strategic target. The National Counterterrorism Strategy, the 2004 Congressional Intelligence Reform Act and UN Security Council Resolution 1373 all emphasize this. Safe havens allow the enemy to recruit, organize, plan, train, coalesce, heal, rest and claim turf as a symbol of legitimacy. This is why al-Qaida and affiliates place so much emphasis on obtaining safe haven. We must focus on the physical and cyberspace the enemy uses to recruit, fundraise, plan and train.

Physical Safe Haven: Usually straddle national borders or exist in regions where ineffective governance allows their presence. Those highlighted in this year's report include the Trans-Sahara, Somalia, the Sulawesi and Sulu Sea littoral, the Afghanistan and Pakistan border. Because of the importance of safe havens, we must continue to develop regional strategies to eliminate them. In order to address the conditions terrorists exploit, the U.S. must work with our many partners around the world to build and sustain democratic, well-governed states that respond to the needs of their people and conduct themselves responsibly in the international system.

There are some examples of success against enemy safe haven. Colombia now has police forces in all 1,098 municipalities throughout the country. The U.S. Government -- with U.S. Government assistance, the Philippines now have control of the island of Basilan and increasingly, the island of Hoklo, both areas of operation for Abu Sayyaf and Jemaah Islamiya. Starting in 2004, Pakistan wrestled most of South Waziristan from al-Qaida influence. Algerian forces have reduced GSP strongholds in Algeria to small, isolated pockets.

Unfortunately, problem areas do remain and we contest them. Al Anbar Province in Iraq, North Waziristan in Pakistan, and of course, Hezbollah dominates areas of Lebanon. And as I mentioned earlier, Iran, the premiere state sponsor of terrorism, provides a national safe haven for its own operatives and members of Hezbollah.

Enemy safe haven includes cyberspace. Terrorists often respond to our collective geopolitical success, flee to cyberspace where they seek a new type of safe haven. Harnessing the internet's potential for speed, security, and global linkage, terrorists increase their ability to conduct some of the activities that once required physical safe haven. They not only use cyberspace to communicate, but also to collect intelligence, disseminate propaganda, recruit operatives, build organizations, fundraise, and even train.

Terrorists are placing encrypted messages in electronic files to hide photos, maps, and messages on innocent third-party websites, chat rooms, and bulletin boards. There are several thousand radical or extremist websites worldwide, many of which disseminate a mixture of fact and propaganda. Countering the messages that terrorists propagate cannot be done quickly or easily. It must become part of a long-term strategy that will demand concerted action at all levels.

Country assessments: As in past years, the report includes regional overviews and commentary on terrorist situations in individual countries. We note progress and the lack of progress where appropriate. Positive examples include: Afghanistan embraced a new democratic government, a remarkable feat even while violence along the Afghanistan-Pakistan border increased. Colombia demobilized 23,000 AUC fighters, adroitly pulled the ELN into negotiations and fought the FARC with determination and success.

At the high point, kidnappings in Colombia exceeded 2,000 per year. In 2005, there were fewer than 300. After the second Bali bombing in October 2005, Indonesian leaders launched a broad CT campaign that has gained momentum. This includes new counterterrorism legislation, successful prosecution of terrorist operatives, an

emphasis on moderate religious theology to blunt radicalization, and the death of Bali bomb maker Azahari bin Hussein in a November shootout.

Iraq is a key battleground characterized by foreign terrorism, an indigenous Iraqi insurgency, and sectarian violence. These three realms of political violence often overlap, yet each is unique and requires unique solutions. Twice in 2005, Iraqis bravely participated in democratic elections and just this week, elected -- Iraqi leaders agreed to form a government, a critical step in ending this violence.

Libya abandoned weapons of mass destruction in 2004 and in 2005 continued to cooperate with the U.S. against terrorists in Africa and the Middle East. By the end of 2005, Saudi Arabia had captured or killed the top 26 senior al-Qaida operatives inside their country. The government also took steps to counter radicalization and opened their financial investigative unit. I'll refer you to the report for further country-specific information, so we can move on.

Let me conclude. al-Qaida and its affiliates are attacking what they fear the most, the development of a global civic society, a society characterized by global networks of liberal institutions, free speech, democratic organizations, free market forces and the rule of law. We must measure CT success in the broadest perspective. Tactical and operational counterterrorism battles will be won and lost, but we wage these battles in a global war within a strategic context. We must fight the enemy with precise, calibrated force to buy space and time to transform the environment and the conditions which terrorists exploit.

We must fight the enemy with all tools of statecraft, in cooperation with our growing network of partners to construct enduring solutions that transcend violence. We will aim to deny the enemy its leadership, its safe haven, and the conditions it exploits. Our citizens and allies expect no less. We hope this report advances our collective understanding of the challenges and the solutions.

Thank you. I'd now like to introduce Mr. Russ Travers, Deputy Director of NCTC.

MR. TRAVERS: Good morning. The National Counterterrorism Center is charged with being the shared knowledge bank for terrorism-related data and so, we've been working for the past year or so to consolidate data on terrorist incidents. You've got the bottom lines within the country reports document. This is an extraordinarily complicated subject and so, what I've got are a few boards for you, we've got some handouts. But I would strongly encourage you to take a look at the website. That has a great deal of methodological data, it's got all the incidents data so that you can slice and dice the numbers in any way you'd like. The important bottom lines: 11,000 incidents; 14.5 thousand fatalities; 25,000 people wounded; and 35,000 people kidnapped. Next board.

I want to talk just a second about methodological issues, because it's very important to understand the reasons behind these relatively large numbers in comparison to previous years. There are three reasons the numbers are so large. First is methodological. Up through all of the patterns of global terrorism documents in the past, we used the definition on the left in the statute for international terrorism, that is, involving citizens of two or more countries. It had the benefit of being relatively simple. The numbers were relatively small. We had several hundred each year. The problem was there were fundamental flaws in that methodology. It was a methodology that was good for capturing state sponsors of terrorism when you had to go across the border, but it didn't capture such things as the assassination of (inaudible), the Superferry bombing in the Philippines of two years ago.

So what we found was that there were many instances, by any reasonable definition of terrorism, that weren't picked up by this international terrorism definition. So when John Brennan was here last year, he committed us to moving in the direction of the terrorism definition in the statute, which is much broader. As suggested on the chart, you will get several thousand incidents a year using this broader definition. So methodology is one reason for the increase. Second reason is level of effort. When John was here last year, he indicated that we would do a retroactive look at 2004 using this broader definition. We had to do it in two months so that we could get on moving the -- looking at the 2005 data. So when we did this retroactive look, it was sort of -- (inaudible) across the top -- what we picked up, undoubtedly, were the high fatality incidents. But I'm equally confident that we missed thousands of incidents in which few or no people were killed. And so that does limit the comparability of the data. And the third major issue for the growth of incidents this past year has to do with Iraq. And as Hank has said, there are a number of reasons associated with what Zarqawi is trying to accomplish and his war on the Shia and so forth.

So the bottom line here is that 2005 is a far more comprehensive data set and it also limits the comparability between '04 and '05. Now what I will do at the end is give you one comparison that I think is an apples-to-apples look to give you a sense of what's going on. And assuming those statutory changes, we will continue to use this definition.

You got to keep the incidents in perspective. If you look at the left-hand chart, what we can say, if we look across all of the incidents, you can get a sense of how attacks were conducted. One interesting point: we catalogued about 360 suicide bombings in 2005 that were responsible for about 3,000 fatalities. But importantly, terrorism is a tactic. It's used by different groups for different rationales in different regions. The 11,000 incident figure would include things like the FARC, ETA, JI, Lord's Resistance Army. Simply adding all of these incidents together doesn't, in our view, make a great deal of sense. So, the bottom line here is that you can't, in fact, use this as a metric, that simple total number of incident data.

Similarly, if you look at the right-hand chart, it gives you a sense of graphing incidents against fatalities. As you see on the left-hand side, a few incidents had many fatalities, but if you look at the bar on the extreme right-hand side, almost 6,000 incidents in 2005 had no fatalities whatsoever. Why do we even capture that material? I think that we're going to find, over time, it's going to be of a lot of interest to us because it includes things like attacks on

infrastructure. It includes suicide bombings like the kind we saw two days ago. In the Sinai, two suicide bombers, but nobody else was killed but the suicide bombers. So we want to capture that data, again, to be as transparent as possible so people can search this in any way they'd like. Next.

One way in which I think you can use the data to good instruction is if you look across regions. Clearly, as you can see on the bars, we've got terrorism going on all over the globe. Near East and South Asia hit particularly hard. Roughly 70 percent of all incidents occurred in those two regions. That accounted for roughly 80 percent of all fatalities. And if you burrow down a little bit further, within Iraq, about 30 percent of the incidents accounted for about 50-some percent of the total fatalities globally. And indeed, in all regions with the exception of the Western Hemisphere, there were major Sunni attacks -- Sunni extremist attacks that were often coordinated, often multiple in nature. Next.

The human toll in 2005, significant, something like 14.5 thousand people killed worldwide, of which about 56 Americans -- the vast majority of those were in Iraq. Several unique categories are suggested here. Roughly, 6500 police out of the total 40,000 people killed or wounded were police, about a thousand children, about a hundred journalists were killed worldwide. In total, of 40,000 people killed or wounded, somewhere between 10 and 15,000 were Muslims largely killed in Iraq by other Muslims.

The kidnapping figure is very heavily skewed by Nepal. We would find examples of the Maoists going in and actually absconding with entire school districts of teachers and students, so Nepal accounted for about 95 percent of all the kidnappings worldwide last year. Next.

And lastly, I know there's a lot of interest in comparisons. As I said in the methodology section, we have a limited ability to compare that data because of the differences in methodology and level of effort. Where I think we can safely say we can do a comparison is looking at high fatality counts. And so what you have here on the left are high fatality counts in Iraq. On the right are high fatality incidents in the rest of the world. The black applies to the incidents. The red bars give you the full fatality count.

So if you look at Iraq, what you see is largely a growth from about 65 incidents to about 150 from '04 to '05. The fatality growth was about 1,700 to 3,400, so it essentially doubled. If you look at the rest of the world, the incident totals held steady at about 70 incidents per year, but fell -- the fatalities fell from about 3,000 to about 1,500. Now numerically, that's pretty easy to explain. In '04, what you had were things like Beslan and Madrid, the Superferry, the Russian airliners that went down. These, in many cases, were multiple hundreds of people that were killed, whereas last year, most of the incidents were in the 50, 60, 70s; still obviously very high, but not as high as in '04. I would caution you not to make very much of that drop. We certainly don't. The incidents in '04 were every bit as politically significant, demonstrating Sunni extremists' global reach, the coordinated attacks, and so forth. Similarly, as any political scientist will tell you, two years does not make a trend, so we will watch this over time.

So quickly, that was the data that we provided. As I say, there is far more out there on the web if you're interested in looking at the -- sort of the nuances of methodology and so forth. A couple of things that aren't in the data that we would note; despite al-Qaida intention -- al-Qaida senior leadership intensions, obviously, no attacks on the homeland and no attacks with weapons of mass destruction. So that's what I have. Thank you.

MR. ERELI: Thank you, Russ. Thank you, Hank. Saul.

QUESTION: Can I ask you what does Sudan and Libya have to do to get off the state sponsor terror list? And when you talked about Iran, what is the help that they are giving -- that you said they're giving insurgents? Are you saying the state of Iran actually gave the components to insurgents for the IEDs?

AMBASSADOR CRUMPTON: The first question. Libya continues to make progress. We have outlined specifically to them what we need. They have to not engage in any terrorism for a certain period of time and we have to be able to verify that. They have to pledge to renounce terrorism, and they have. In fact, Secretary Rice met with the Libyan Foreign Minister last year and there was a joint statement to that effect. And we're at the point right now of continuing our discussions, verifying some issues and moving forward.

Sudan -- Sudan has made good progress in terms of our counterterrorism efforts, but as I have told them, including their Foreign Minister last year, that we cannot exclude Darfur from this, given all of the political violence and given the Sudanese Government's role in this violence. We have to work with them and others to resolve this before we can move further.

Your last question was about Iran. Iran supports Hezbollah. They really are the paymasters for Hezbollah. Hezbollah, in turn, are working with some of the Iraqis inside Iraq, also Iran is working directly with some of the Iraqi paramilitary forces, militia, and they provide support, financial and otherwise. Regarding the specific IEDs you talked about, clearly these components have the technology and some of the materiel; we know they came from Iran and our assumption is that the Iranian Government was involved, although we do not have inclusive evidence of that regarding the IEDs at this stage. But there's plenty of other information that points to their support to anti-coalition forces in Iraq.

MR. ERELI: Peter.

QUESTION: Yes, sir, two questions. One is given all the data that you've given us, I was wondering if you can just give us your gut feeling. Last year did we make progress in the war on terrorism in terms of preventing attacks on people? And the second question I have is that it sort of leaped they used -- you called Iraq a key front in the war on terror. Whereas previously, the Administration has been using quite consistently, calling it the central front on the war on terror. Is there any reason why you downgraded it?

AMBASSADOR CRUMPTON: I don't consider it, you know, being downgraded. It is the front. It is a key front, both. I don't see that as being contradictory. And regarding attacks, I think as Russ pointed out, there's different methodology and we don't have an exact comparison of, you know, what transpired this year compared to '04. But as I noted in my assessment chapter and in my comments, we believe that the battlefield and the enemy both continue to evolve and that we think we've made significant progress against al-Qaida as an organization. Their leadership is under great stress.

But in response to our success, you see al-Qaida and affiliates shifting how they operate, reducing their numbers. And so I think they are less capable of hitting our homeland. I think they have less global strategic strength right now. But at the same time, you have got a number of loosely linked networks that are small or more diffuse and more difficult for us to detect and to engage.

QUESTION: But is the world safer than it was the year before?

AMBASSADOR CRUMPTON: I think so. But I think that you look at the ups and downs of this battle, it's going to take us a long time to win this. You can't measure this month by month or year by year. It's going to take a lot longer.

MR. ERELI: Michael.

QUESTION: Why do you think the world is safer?

AMBASSADOR CRUMPTON: I think because, despite what some may argue is an increase in radicalization -- the Danish cartoons is, you know, one example like that, and despite the continued violence we see, there's a growing recognition and a realization among civilized societies and countries and individuals that we've got to bond together. There's been progress made in multilateral efforts. I think there's been progress made in some of the regional efforts that we've embarked upon and bilaterally.

I'll point to Southeast Asia as an example. You look at how Jemaah Islamiya, I think, has been increasingly isolated in the success that Indonesia's forces have had there. Algiers is another good example.

QUESTION: Just a follow-up. Can you quantify that in any way? I mean, you just described a political situation. Can you quantify the relative greater safety of the world this year over last year in any way?

AMBASSADOR CRUMPTON: No, not beyond some of the stats that we've outlined.

MR. ERELI: Yes, ma'am.

QUESTION: Sir, you said that you think that al-Qaida are more nervous now. But there many people in the Arab world feel that -- to the contrary because of the movie, of the film that shows Zarqawi in the Anbar Province he looked very relaxed in fact. So how do you interpret this? And a second question, where do you draw the line, if there's any line, if you differentiate between resistance and terrorism?

AMBASSADOR CRUMPTON: The first question, we are extraordinarily confident that al-Qaida leadership is under greater pressure along the Afghanistan-Pakistan border and also in Iraq.

Your second question is related to the difference between resistance and terrorism. I think we'd need a long time to sit down and explore the particular details, depending on the particular area. But the definition of terrorism is very clear, in fact, it's the first page, I think, in the report that we issued about being politically motivated violence aimed at innocent civilians. And I think that that's fairly well articulated in the report and in legislation.

MR. ERELI: Teri.

QUESTION: Lebanon and Yemen are two countries that you mention. I guess you would call them countries of concern when they're not yet-- they're not on the terrorism list. But how close -- I mean, they have pretty damning records here. The Government of Yemen building an ally fund -- seems to be funding Hamas and PIJ. How close are they? I mean, do these countries need to worry? Are they close to being put on the list or what is the lack of data that keeps them off?

AMBASSADOR CRUMPTON: Yemen continues to cooperate with us, but their capacity is limited. You look at the recent jail break there as a cause of great concern and we've raised this with the Yemeni Government. Regarding their political discussions with Hamas and others, we have expressed our concern about that and we continue to engage with President Saleh and his CT team, but they have a long way to go. And we think through constructive engagement and through some assistance we can help them, but it's been difficult. I won't argue that at all. I'm sorry. The other country you mentioned?

QUESTION: I said Yemen and Lebanon. Why is Yemen not on the list, though, if they have all of those qualities?

AMBASSADOR CRUMPTON: Because we don't see them as a state sponsor. We don't see them directly supporting terrorism and acts of terrorism. In fact, just the opposite, they've been helping against al-Qaida and some of the affiliate organizations.

MR. ERELI: Yes, sir.

QUESTION: You didn't answer Lebanon.

AMBASSADOR CRUMPTON: I'm sorry, Lebanon. Lebanon has a fragile government. We believe that they are working diligently to the extent they can to fulfill the UN Security Council resolutions. They are working against Palestinian rejectionist forces and we're trying to help them, also Hezbollah. For them, Hezbollah is a greater challenge. Hezbollah, of course, they have members of parliament, they provide social services but they're also a terrorist organization and there are limitations to what the Lebanese Government can do, given its fragile nature and given the complex political alliances there.

MR. ERELI: Yes, sir.

QUESTION: Yes. You said that the small (inaudible) cells and even individuals is getting harder to deal with. Do you see any trend in their progress in these efforts? Do you see that they will at one point pose a larger threat than al-Qaida or the other organizations?

AMBASSADOR CRUMPTON: I think that what you see is a long-term trend. I think that enemy forces, terrorist forces will continue to become smaller and more difficult for us to detect and I think that places an emphasis on the value of intelligence. If you see cells that are self-radicalized and they self-organize and they're only four, like we saw in the London bombings last July, that's a challenge. And there's no specific answer to that other than to do the best intelligence work you can in concert with law enforcement, plus, and this is the longer term issue that we stress, is how do you deal with the radical elements and ideology and address specific social, economic, political conditions that terrorists exploit. That will be the enduring answer.

All we do when we find and stop the enemy, sometimes using force, is to buy a space in time to implement these more enduring solutions.

MR. ERELI: Yes, sir.

QUESTION: The reports mention a PKK presence inside Iraq that it says causes friction between Turkey and Iraq. Now, today's press reports suggests that Turkey's special forces are operating on the Iraqi side of the border to fight the PKK. Could you confirm that?

AMBASSADOR CRUMPTON: No. I cannot confirm that. We do have concerns about PKK forces along that area and we've talked to the Iraqi Government about it. And of course as you know, Secretary Rice was just in Turkey and we're going to work closely with the new Iraqi Government and the Turkish Government to help them. We have a long history of cooperation with Turkey. And given the increase in violence recently from PKK forces, we'll have to do some more work.

MR. ERELI: Yes, ma'am.

QUESTION: Two questions if I may, Ambassador. One of the trends that you all highlight in here is a rise in suicide bombings over the previous year, and I wonder if you could comment on that. Is that a trend you anticipate will continue?

And secondly, just -- I'm still a little confused on the methodology, why we can't compare this to last year's numbers. As I remember last year, John Brennan did a briefing in the summer saying that he was already expanding the definition and it did not have to have an international component to count and last year it was something 3,000 incidents. What is the difference? I mean, it's nearly quadruple, this 11,000 figure we've got. Why can't we compare it?

AMBASSADOR CRUMPTON: Right. Regarding your first question, I think this trend will continue -- suicide bombers - again, it's also a reflection of the enemy becoming smaller to avoid detection, to avoid offensive engagement and I think that poses challenges. That in combination I think with -- in some quarters, growing radicalization. So, yes, I think that's a trend that will continue.

Regarding your second question, let me turn this over to Russ.

MR. TRAVERS: As I said, there were three reasons for the growth in the numbers. You're quite right, that when John was here last year, he indicated that because of the flaws in the international terrorism definition, we would move to the standard definition of terrorism.

QUESTION: Right.

MR. TRAVERS: He also committed us to taking a quick look, retroactively going through the 2004 data and applying that new definition. We did that. We did it in May and June of last year, as opposed to the sort of nine months with more analysts looking at the entire 2005, so it's really a level of effort difference. As I said, I'm quite convinced that when we did the retroactive look of 2004, we captured the high fatality incidents in '04, but I'm positive that we missed many. We just weren't able to get down into the details.

In Nepal, for instance, they talk about all the kidnappings; we didn't do much on Nepal in '04. So the comparative charts I gave you at the end, that's an apples and apples thing. But if you look at the 11,000 versus 3,000 that would be a false comparison I think.

QUESTION: So the standard being used in this report and the one that came out, the revised one that came out last summer would be the same. You're just saying you all had a lot more time to compile the data for this year.

MR. TRAVERS: We did two data sets in '04. We did it under the international terrorism definition when John Brennan and Counselor Zelikow went through the *Country Reports* late in April of last year that was the international terrorism. We then put data out on the web in late June or early July and that was the 3,100 incidents under the new definition.

MR. ERELI: Yes.

QUESTION: In your opening remarks you listed the suspected or known terrorist safe havens and one of them you listed was Al Anbar Province in Iraq. I was wondering if you could give a little more detail about why you consider Anbar to be a terrorist safe haven.

AMBASSADOR CRUMPTON: We don't see it to be a safe haven; we see it to be a battleground. It's particularly challenging, however, given the border with Syria. And I think we stressed this before that often the enemy safe havens, and more often than not in fact, enemy safe havens reside in border areas and that makes it more challenging. Enemy forces know very well where national borders are and that's a big piece of the problem in Al Anbar, plus some of the conditions there, there's been a historical distance politically between some of the local elements there and the Baghdad Government. So that's going to take a longer-term, more enduring solution.

QUESTION: A lot of analysis is focused on what appears to be growing al-Qaida operations in Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, and even parts of the Palestinian Territories, where there was not much al-Qaida activity before. Do you agree with that assessment? And if so, do you see this as a kind of a relationship to the Iraq war or do you see them as shifting their tactics or their strategic sort of vision of where they're heading?

AMBASSADOR CRUMPTON: Right. I think it depends on how you define al-Qaida. I think more accurately, these might be affiliated or likeminded groups or individuals. Of course, one example is the Zarqawi network. You know, there's clear affiliation there and some of the attacks he's launched -- against a wedding party in Jordan is one example. You see some connectivity in Egypt and really throughout the Levant and this is a concern, especially a concern of the Lebanese Government. And they're working with us to blunt this intrusion.

QUESTION: Do you think they're increasingly trying to hit Israel directly?

AMBASSADOR CRUMPTON: I think they're going to target Israel. They are targeting Israel. I think they're going to target us. I think they're going to target a number of international forces.

MR. ERELI: Yeah, Elise.

QUESTION: Sorry if you went over this. I know you talked a little bit about Sudan and how you can't separate the issue of Darfur from taking them off the terrorism list. But given the new kind of statistics and the fact that you're using

incidents of domestic terror in terms of the statistics, do you consider acts by the Sudanese Government, their involvement in (inaudible) in attacks in Sudan as attacks of terrorism against people in Darfur and acts by the Janjaweed as well?

MR. TRAVERS: We do. The way we count them, attacks on noncombatants, in general, are viewed as terrorism. So for instance, an insurgency directed against noncombatants, if they go in Eastern Iraq we have the same thing and take out a village, that would be considered terrorism. Similarly, we do pick up acts in Darfur. We caveat it, again, if you go to the methodology section, what you'll see if that we fully acknowledge that the reporting is not comprehensive by any stretch of the imagination. When we get reports on what's going on in Darfur and Janjaweed going in and taking out noncombatants, we do, in fact, pick them up. They are in the database, yes.

QUESTION: So they're considered -- I'm sorry, just to clarify, so what's going on against the people in Darfur by the Janjaweed and if you find the government to be responsible, those are acts of terrorism?

MR. TRAVERS: We are carrying those acts of terrorism in our database, yes.

MR. ERELI: Yes, ma'am.

QUESTION: This is a question for Ambassador Crumpton. Sir, the House has passed legislation that would make officials with foreign governments eligible for rewards under the Rewards for Justice Program if they help finger a terrorist. And I'm wondering if you think this is a good idea, if people are our allies in this fight, you know, why should we need to pay them to help us find terrorists?

AMBASSADOR CRUMPTON: I have not read that legislation yet, but I think that may reflect, indeed, an effort to help encourage our allies in this regard as an incentive. But I can't go beyond that until I read the legislation.

MR. ERELI: Yeah, in the back.

QUESTION: I have a question on Latin America. For some years in (inaudible), the worst criticism of your report goes to the President Hugo Chavez of Venezuela. And this year, you said that President Chavez has an ideological affinity with a Colombian terrorist group. Is the U.S. Administration trying to get into a dialogue or something like that with President Hugo Chavez about this?

AMBASSADOR CRUMPTON: Yes, we have a dialogue with the Venezuelan Government and we have expressed our concern, especially given the FARC's ability to use that border area between Colombia and Venezuela. And we are going to continue to work with the Venezuelan Government to see if they can improve their posture, although we haven't had much luck lately.

MR. ERELI: All right. One last question.

QUESTION: Sir, one of the aspects that's possibly not in this report that should be; recently, there has been the recognition in England, the U.K., that various terrorists have been released and also, the Saudis have done the same thing. They've released some al-Qaida terrorists. And are you doing anything to monitor and strengthen the individual justice systems in various countries, especially in Africa and elsewhere?

AMBASSADOR CRUMPTON: Yes, and if it's not emphasized in that report, we need to take a look at it and talk about some of that maybe in next year's report, because it's a key element. The rule of law -- and not just law enforcement, but the rule of law -- and the culture that comes with the rule of law, all of these are aspects that we're acutely aware of and we are working with our international partners. I'll give you an example. My office, another office in the Department of State, INL, we fund Department of Justice employees, specifically U.S. prosecutors, to go overseas and serve as legal advisors to the ambassadors and to work with host governments in terms of their legislation, in terms of prison reform, in terms of prosecution. And I would hope to expand this program. It's been very successful and very helpful and we certainly have a long way to go in Africa and elsewhere. Good question. Thank you.

MR. ERELI: Let's do one more. Yes, ma'am.

QUESTION: Going back to one of the first questions about whether Iraq is the key front or the central front, I don't mean to nitpick language, but you say on page 15 that it will be several years before the war's outcome is no longer in doubt. And that's actually the first doubt as to the outcome that I've heard expressed by this Administration. And I wondered why you chose those words, because it implies clearly that the outcome still isn't out.

AMBASSADOR CRUMPTON: Well, in our mind, there's no doubt, but I think if you look in the minds of the Iraqi people and this is what that references to and I'm sorry we did not articulate that in a more in a better fashion. And bear in mind, as I noted, it's not only -- when we talk about this political violence, it's not only international terrorism, but it's also indigenous Iraqi anti-coalition forces that use terrorism as a tactic and increasingly, it's also sectarian conflict. And all these come together and it makes it confusing and doubtful for, I think, the Iraqi people. However, they have responded last year with a great turnout in two elections and as I noted earlier, with a new government being formed, I hope we can move through this. And also, I think this point really is meant to stress the long-term nature of the conflict in Iraq and, frankly, this global war on terrorism. This is going to take years to resolve.

MR. ERELI: Thank you very much.

AMBASSADOR CRUMPTON: Thank you.

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